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# *BRAVE NEW WORLD* AS SHAKSPERE CRITICISM

By Robert H. Wilson

ALDOUS HUXLEY's *Brave New World*[1] is primarily social satire. As pointed out by reviewers and critics, the year of Our Ford 632 described in the novel—with its centralization, mechanization, and high level of consumption; with human ova fertilized and grown in the laboratory, and infertile sexual promiscuity a social duty—is much less a genuine vision of the future than a caricature of social patterns and tendencies already present in the modern world.

Yet philosophical and literary implications have also been noted. The well-adjusted contentment of the Fordian era comes at the cost not only of ideals of romantic love, but as explained by Controller Mustapha Mond, of every other ideal of nobility and heroism which involves either physical suffering or internal conflict and inhibition. And hence our traditional literature, particularly tragedy and most particularly Shakspere, would be rejected as meaningless even if it were not banned as subversive.

For emphasis, this particular issue of literary valuation, like the broader ones of spiritual and social values, is symbolized in the novel by the appearance in civilized London of John, the "Savage," who in growing up on an Indian reservation has happened to possess a one-volume Shakspere, has been influenced by it in his ideas about sex, and quotes from it.[2]

The treatment of Shakspere, however, has occupied critics only briefly, and has never been made the subject of a separate study.

What is first observed when one looks closely at this aspect of the novel is the extent and variety of the Shakperian references and quotations.[3] Not only is the title a quotation from *The Tempest,* but the ironic appositeness of Miranda's words to John's discovery of outside civiliza-

tion is brought out in three passages. In addition to the long, frequently-referred-to debate between the Savage and Mond, in Chapters XVI and XVII, on the values of Fordian civilization (and the "feelies") as compared with the traditional values represented in Shakspere, there is in Chapter XII an almost equally interesting presentation of the reactions of Helmholtz Watson, himself a poet or "emotional engineer," when John reads Shakspere to him. Other Shaksperian quotations and references are spread through the novel, in eleven of its eighteen chapters.

*The Tempest* can be considered the play most frequently referred to, but only by counting each separate "brave new world" repetition, and likewise the false reference to Ariel as putting "a girdle round the earth in forty minutes."[4] Counting only once each passage quoted or alluded to (with or without correct indication of source), but counting separately each other reference or chain of references to a title or character, one finds Huxley making eight uses of *The Tempest,* the same number as of *Othello,* two fewer than of *Hamlet.* There are six uses of *Macbeth* and of *Romeo and Juliet,* five of *Lear* and of *Troilus and Cressida,* two of *The Merchant of Venice,* one each of *Antony and Cleopatra* (the same line quoted in two widely separated passages), *Midsummer Night's Dream, Timon, Twelfth Night, Julius Caesar, As You Like It, King John,* and *Measure for Measure.*

"The Phoenix and the Turtle" also provides a series of quotations in the Savage-Watson scene, and there are five references to Shakspere in general. Occasionally, too, John's language has the archaic tone which one might expect from his saturation with Elizabethan English.[5]

Of the references and quotations, one—in addition to the title—is by Huxley in his own person, when he includes *Lear* in the list of monuments whisked away by Mustapha Mond's wave of the hand dismissing history as bunk. A few are by Mond, who, in fact, has the works of Shakspere in a safe in his office along with the Bible and other forbidden books. The great majority are in the mouth or mind of the Savage, and range from his seizing upon a conve-

nient word ("caskets," "horror, horror, horror") or a meaningful expression ("told by an idiot," "Goats and monkeys!") to passages several lines in length.

Some quotations are read out of the Savage's mouse-eaten volume, others reproduced from memory with an occasional alteration or error. Some, printed as verse or provided with a source citation or both, stand out to a reader as quotations, and usualy indicate that the speaker has Shakspere in his conscious mind—as do the independent references to a character, a play, or Shakspere himself. Other quotations merge insensibly with the surrounding text, and many of these would seem to have become the unconscious vehicles of the Savage's own thought. This is very likely to be true where a quotation of some length involves omissions and insertions, or where several quoted passages, from the same or different plays, blend through connections of subject matter or wording.

All this embodiment of Shaksperian material in the novel need not, of course, be critical in purpose. Some of it, in fact, seems to have only the artistic aim of making a grotesque contrast between the old and the new, with Shakspere as a conveniently quotable one-volume author representing the old. But explicit, conscious criticism is easily observable, and its presence justifies a search for implicit valuations as well.

One explicit point, the tying up of tragic values in Shakspere with a world of conflict and instability, has been generally recognized, since it is made in the Savage-Mond debate. Another point, to which Huxley can be seen to have devoted almost as much attention, if one gathers up the scattered references, is that Shakspere's predominant claim to greatness is in his style, his word magic.

Thus, upon John's first reading the Shakspere brought by his mother's Indian lover, and seeing Hamlet's position as similar to his own:

> The strange words rolled through his mind; rumbled, like talking thunder; like the drums at the summer dances, if the drums could

> have spoken; like the men singing the Corn Song . . . somehow it was as though he had never really hated Popé before; never really hated him because he had never been able to say how much he hated him. But now he had these words, these words like drums and singing and magic.[6]

As Helmholtz Watson listens to John's reading in Chapter XII, he is particularly affected by the "Phoenix and the Turtle" phrases "sole Arabian tree," "thou shrieking harbinger," "every fowl of tyrant wing," and "defunctive music." *Romeo and Juliet,* with its non-Fordian attitudes toward sex, parents, and disposal of the dead, arouses in him amusement which mounts to uncontrolled laughter, yet all the time he appreciates the "poetry," the "really good, penetrating, X-rayish phrases." "Taken detail by verbal detail, what a superb piece of emotional engineering!"

When in Chapter XIII Lenina tries to seduce John, and one sensuous Shaksperian passage comes to his mind, "the singing, thundering, magical words made her seem doubly dangerous, doubly alluring." Lenina, too, "knew words that sang and were spells and beat drums," though her quotation of a popular song does not affect John, and he finds much Shakspere to help him condemn her as a strumpet while he paces the floor "marching to the drums and music of magical words."

From John's meditation on death in the final chapter, in the midst of a series of quotations, come "A convincing thunder rumbled through the words" and "Thunder again; words that proclaimed themselves true—truer somehow than truth itself." Conversely, Huxley presents it as supreme evidence of the ineffability of John's mystical experience of awareness of God that in spite of his wanting to speak of it "there were no words. Not even in Shakspere."[7]

With this background of explicit literary theory, it is not surprising that the novel contains so many quotations supposedly from memory, and that there are many more quotations without indication of their source or dramatic situation than there are references to Shaksperian ideas or situations unaccompanied by quotations.

In the category of implicit judgments, one should first consider Huxley's exemplification of what has been called the universality of Shakspere. In one sense, this means wideness of appeal. The Savage, whose only previous literary experience has been with his mother's Fordian nursery rhymes and laboratory manual; Helmholtz Watson as a professional propaganda technician; Mustapha Mond, a physicist turned government official because his research was considered subversive, and acquainted with the literature of both past and present—all these are supposed to have easily resognized Shakspere's greatness.

In a second sense, what is meant is the variety of human situations and institutions with which Shakspere deals. John is able to find Shaksperian parallels for his mother's disgrace and for his own suffering of race prejudice "for my complexion."[8] He learns both the most worshipful romantic love and the most violent disgust at sex. He is helped in forming ideas of "Time and Death and God,"[9] of an absolute value that "dwells not in particular will,"[10] of what a doctor means in referring to narcosis as giving a subjective eternity out of time.[11] He also has at hand such odd pieces of information as the nature of a cardinal and the definition of a philosopher as "a man who dreams of fewer things than there are in heaven and earth,"[12] or the fact that it is appropriate to address a crowd by saying "Lend me your ears."[13]

Huxley might almost seem to be demonstrating that the works of Shakspere constitute a useful encyclopedia and manual of quotations for every occasion, as well as covering a range of ideas and activities beyond that of almost any novelist. Yet at the same time, he is careful to point out that Shakspere is universal only in terms of a traditional social and intellectual pattern in which he has closer contacts with primitive man than with the Fordian world (or even much of the actual twentieth century). Thus, John attempts to explain to Lenina: "In Malpais people get married. . . . They make a promise to live together for always. . . . It's like that in Shakspere too."[14] And later "Science? The Savage frowned. He knew the

word. But what it exactly signified he could not say. Shakspere and the old men of the pueblo had never mentioned science."[15]

Consideration of this point brings one to a deeper level of implication, perhaps not entirely conscious with Huxley himself, underlying the remarks about Shakspere's having no place in the Fordian world. For if the Fordian world is already with us in many of the more modernistic aspects of modern life, then the disappearance of meaningfulness in Shakspere has begun.

That there has been, in fact, a loss of significance, in the sense of meanings which are deeply stirring or seem seriously applicable to our own lives, it would be hard to deny, though the extent of loss will vary with the "modernity" of individuals. Whereas one reader may react fully to the original significances of *King Lear,* another—although impressed by its treatment of the problem of evil—will consider the dictum that it is the greatest Shaksperian tragedy to have been outmoded along with the Victorian heavy father.

Accordingly, when Helmholtz Watson feels an amused incomprehension of Juliet's emotional dependence upon her parents, Huxley is only presenting in him an exaggeration of this same twentieth century attitude toward family relationships. Many modern readers will likewise share Mustapha Mond's refusal to be impressed by the idea of providential intervention cited by John from the solution of *Lear.* And it has not taken the arrival of complete promiscuity, but only of a reasonably matter-of-fact attitude toward sex, to bring appreciable sympathy for the Fordian side of the one contrast brought out most extensively in the novel—between a modernistic world and the Savage's Shaksperian idealization of servile romantic devotion and horror at unchastity.

If, then, Huxley judges Shakspere as being, in large fields of thought, unmodern, is the judgment unfavorable to him and his conceptions, or to us and ours? Decision is made difficult by a tendency so natural that there are signs

of it in many of the reviews: to assume that because the Fordian world is satirized, therefore Shaksperian tragedy is held up as an ideal point of reference.

The most definite evidence that this is unlikely to be the case may be found in Huxley's other writings, both before and after *Brave New World.* Thus a specific criticism of Shakspere, very similar to Watson's, is made by the syympathetic character Chelifer in *Those Barren Leaves*:

> Old Shakespeare . . . How many critical brains have been deceived by the quickness of *his* tongue! Because he can say . . . "defunctive music" and "the expense of spirit in a waste of shame" and all the rest of it, we credit him with a philosophy, a moral purpose and the most penetrating psychology. Whereas his thoughts are incredibly confused, his only purpose is to entertain and he has created only three characters.[16]

Likewise, not Shakspere himself to be sure, but the complex of disgusted ideas about sex reflected in *Othello,* is described in "The Moor" as the product of "good St. Jerome's filthy tongue."[17]

In a broader sort of criticism, the partially disapproving contrast in "Tragedy and the Whole Truth"[18] is indicated by the title; and the sympathetic Mr. Propter in *After Many a Summer* intensifies the attack in an argument which, although its mystical ideal of happiness is the opposite of Mustapha Mond's materialistic one, otherwise resembles it closely:

> And that . . . was another of the enormous defects of so-called good literature . . . It helped to perpetuate misery by explicitly or implicitly approving the thoughts and feelings and practices which could not fail to result in misery. And this approval was bestowed in the most magnificent and persuasive language. So that even when a tragedy ended badly the reader was hypnotized by the eloquence of the piece into imagining that it was all somehow noble and worth while . . . No, a good satire was much more deeply truthful and of course much more profitable than a good tragedy.[19]

Even the discussion in Huxley's own person, in *Those Barren Leaves,* of the possibility that a happy future

society may have no room for literature, since it is based on misery, ends on the uncertain note, "Perhaps it will be all for the best."[20]

With this external evidence as a guide to one's examination of implicit meanings, he notes that John's Shaksperianisms, of thought as well as language, often make him ridiculous. Mond's remarks in the debate of Chapters XVI and XVII, ranging from patient irony to powerful oratory, are allowed many qualities of convincingness. Both Watson in Chapter XII, and in Chapter XVI even John, prescribe for the world around them not Shakspere himself, but something like him. And John's death, coming by his own hand and only after he has fallen away from his ideals, is not exalted.[21]

In the ironic contrast between the Fordian and prescientific world outlooks, neither fares well; and Huxley does not, as in his later novels, preach a way out of the choice of evils. As for Shakspere, Huxley may be taken to imply that we can best profit from the plays if we view them esthetically and not, in John's fashion, as textbooks of thought and conduct.

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[1]London, 1932.

[2]Comments summarized from "Bottle-World," *Times Literary Supplement,* February 4, 1932, p. 73; Bullett, Gerald, *Fortnightly Review,* CXXXVII (1932), 402-3; Chamberlain, John, *New York Times Book Review,* February 7, 1932, p. 5; Cushing, Edward, *Saturday Review of Literature,* VIII (1932), 521; Haldane, Charlotte, "Dr. Huxley and Mr. Arnold," *Nature,* CXXIX (1932), 597-98; Hazlitt, Henry, "What's Wrongwith Utopia?" *Nation,* CXXXIV (1932), 204-6; Henderson, Alexander, *Aldous Huxley* (London, 1935), pp. 87-111; Houston, P. H., "The Salvation of Aldous Huxley," *American Review,* IV (1934), 209-32; Maynard, Theodore, "Aldous Huxley, Moralist," *Catholic World,* CXLIV (1936), 12-22; Petre, M. D., "Bolshevist Ideals and the 'Brave New World,'" *Hibbert Journal,* XXXI (1932), 61-71; Thompson, Alan Reynolds, Bookman, LXXIV (1932), 690-92.

[3]The quotations and references analyzed in the text are as follows. Starred quotations are those for which the novel supplies a correct reference to speaker, title, or author. Shakespeare lining is from the Oxford *Complete Works of Shakespeare,* ed. W. J. Craig (New York, n. d.).

Title: *Tempest,* V, i, 183.

Chap. III, p. 38: reference to *Lear;* p. 60: ref. to Shakspere.

Chap. VII, pp. 135-36: *Macbeth,* V, i, 38; II, ii, 63; *Merchant of Venice,* II, i, 1.

Chap. VIII, pp. 154-57: *Hamlet,* III, iv, 91-94*; I, v, 108; II, ii, 617; III, iii, 89-90; p. 161: *Macbeth,* V, v, 19; pp. 164-65: *Tempest,* V, i, 181-84* (reuse).

Chap. IX, pp. 170-71: *Troilus,* I, i, 56-60; *Romeo and Juliet,* III, iii, 35-39; I, v, 97.

Chap. IX, p. 182: *Antony and Cleopatra,* I, iii, 35; p. 186: false ref. to Ariel; *MSND.,* II, i, 176-76; p. 188: *Tempest,* V, i, 183-84* (re-use); p. 192, ref. to Shakspere; p. 194: *Merchant of Venice,* II, i, 23, and *passim**; p. 202: ref. to *Othello.*

Chap. XII, pp. 208-18: *Romeo and Juliet,* reference; I, v, 48-51; summary ending with quotation from III, v, 198-203*; "The Phoenix and the Turtle," II, 1-42*.

Chap. XIII, pp. 222-27: *Tempest,* III, i, 37-48, 1-3; IV, i, 15-17*, 25-28, 52-54; *Troilus,* III, ii, 169-70; *Macbeth,* II, iii, 70; *Timon,* IV, iii, 116-17; pp. 229-31: *Othello,* IV, ii, 80, 66-76; *Lear,* IV, ii, 155-34; *Troilus,* V, ii, 53-54; p. 232: *Twelfth Night,* I, v, 199.

Chap. XV, pp. 247-48: *Tempest,* V, i, 182-83* (re-use); p. 249: *Julius Caesar,* III, ii, 79; p. 251: *AYLI.,* II, vii, 144.

Chap. XVI, pp. 257-60: *Tempest,* III, ii, 149-50; ref. to Shakspere; *Othello,* IV, i, 274*; series of references to *Othello;* ref. to *Romeo and Juliet; Macbeth,* V, v, 27; p. 265: ref. to Shakspere.

Chap. XVII, pp. 271-73: references to Shakspere and to *Othello; King John,* III, 1, 138*; *Hamlet,* I, v, 166-67; pp. 277-83: *Lear,* V, iii, 172-76*; *Troilus,* II, ii, 53-56; *Othello,* II, i, 188-89*; *Hamlet,* III, i, 57-60; IV, iv, 51-63; ref. to Desdemona and Othello.

Chap. XVIII, p. 287: ref. to Claudius; p. 297: *Othello,* IV, ii, 80, and *Antony and Cleopatra,* I, iii, 35 (both re-uses); pp. 299-300: *Macbeth,* V, v, 22-23; *Hamlet,* II, ii, 184; III, i, 65-66; *Lear,* IV, i, 36-37*; IV, vi, 222*; *Measure for Measure,* III, i, 17-19; p. 304: *Troilus,* V, ii, 55.

[4]Chap. XI, p. 186.

[5]The most pronounced instances are in John's first remarks on greeting the strangers from outside, Chap. VII, p. 135: "Hullo. Good-morrow," and a few sentences later, referring to an Indian boy who has been whipped, "A most unhappy gentleman." There are also scattered uses of "fitchew," "strumpet," "whore," and other words even less obviously archaic.

[6]Chap. VIII, p. 155-56.

[7]Chap. XVII, p. 271.

[8]Chap. VII, p. 136.

[9]Chap. VIII, p. 161.

[10]Chap. XVII, p. 278.

[11]Chap. XI, p. 182, "Eternity was in our lips and eyes."

[12]Both items in Chap. XVII, pp. 272-73.

[13]Chap. XV, p. 249.

[14]Chap. XIII, p. 225.

[15]Chap. XVI, p. 265. (Shakspere mentions science in at least four passages. —Ed.)

[16]*Those Barren Leaves* (new impression, London, 1934), Part II, Chap. II, p. 99.

[17]*The Cicadas and Other Poems* (Garden City, N. Y., 1931), p. 29.

[18]*Music at Night and Other Essays* (New York, 1931), pp. 7-14; also printed separately, *Virginia Quarterly Review,* VII (1931), 176-85.

[19]Chap. XVI: *Harper's Magazine,* CLXXX (1940), 313. (American Book title, *After Many a Summer Dies the Swan.*)

[20]*Those Barren Leaves,* Part I, Chap. VI, p. 57. The passage is quoted by Henderson, *op. cit.,* p. 127, and by Houston, *op. cit.,* p. 229 (erroneously calling it a quotation from the character Cardan).

[21]On this last point see "Bottle-World."

# A PREFACE TO *OTHELLO**

*By* R. W. Babcock

MR. Granville-Barker has produced another *Preface* to a play of Shakspere—this time *Othello*—and, as Mr. Stoll has called this Englishman "A True Shakespeare Critic,"[1] his work should be carefully considered. The book is certainly valuable for its illumination of particular scenes and various aspects of the characters and for its historical interest in the source of the play and in the stage-business, especially with reference to the Elizabethan theater: this last point has always been Mr. Granville-Barker's forte. It is less valuable for its occasional psychological circumlocutions, for its evasion of previous scholarship on the play, and for its textual animadversions. All in all, though, it is a worthy addition to modern Shaksperian criticism, though by no means as worthy as the critic's Preface on *Hamlet*.

It is a small volume with no Index and only 5 chapters following the Preface: "The Story and the Play," "The Shaping of the Play," "Act and Scene Division," "The Characters," and "The Verse." Chapters II and IV are by far the most important, and the book has two appended notes: "A: Othello's Color" and "B: Othello's Christianity." It is all very easy to follow, with simple chronological development dominating both of the most important chapters, with no serious arguments arising anywhere, and with a style that is of course generally[2] graceful from beginning to end.

The Preface states the purpose clearly: "*Othello* is dominated by the problem of the falling of this man—not only of noble nature is he, but of ability too—an unresisting victim to such a charlatan as Iago . . . the tragedy, if it is to compel our interest, must be a tragedy of character . . . in no other that he wrote does the immediate operation of mind upon mind count for so much . . . The central episode . . . and the technical daring of the means used to make it

*Granville-Barker, Harley. *Prefaces to Shakespeare*. Fourth Series: *Othello*. London: Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd., 1945. Pp. x + 224.

convincing, have no parallel. I have therefore given the fullest space to their study . . . " The book, then, will develop the psychology of the characters and Shakspere's technical skill in handling them, especially in specific scenes.

The first chapter, "The Story and the Play," tells not only what changes Shakspere made in Cinthio's story but also why he made them. For example, "Shakespeare prefers an elopement for his starting point, since this gives an initial impetus to the action" (p. 2). "The capital change, however, is that which converts the anonymous Moor into Othello, since with this it is that the whole brutal story is raised to the heigths of tragedy" (p. 6). Shakspere adds, also, a conflict "of the essence of the men." And at the end Othello, not the Ensign, "is made . . . to do the deed himself" (p. 9). So the background is laid for a study of the development of the whole play.

This second chapter, "The Shaping of the Play," is the core of the book—covering 140 pages. It contains three parentheses for supplementary analysis and summary, but otherwise scene by scene, almost, the author analyzes and vivifies the action of the play from beginning to end. This procedure throws considerable light on the interconnection of scenes as well as on the meaning of the scenes themselves. After a very good discussion of Shakspere's "freedom with time," the author notes how the move to Cyprus broke the continuity of action and how Shakspere covered up the break. One of the best sections is the first parenthesis, called "The Ambiguity in Time" (pp. 30-8), which explains most clearly the technical use of double time in the play: "Shakespeare smooths incongruities away by letting the action follow the shorter, the 'hourly' calendar—from dawn and the aubade to midnight and the murder—without more comment than is necessary, while he takes the longer one for granted in a few incidental references" (pp. 35-6). By this time Mr. Granville-Barker has got ready for the famous 300 lines of Act III, Sc. 3, in which Othello moves from "Perdition catch my soul But I do love thee" to "I'll tear her all to pieces" and "Oh blood, blood, blood"

(c. line 440); and he is perfectly satisfied that his psychological exposition clears the case for Iago, and for Othello too, for that matter. "One way, and a swift one," he says, "to the corrupting of the mind is through a perverting of the imagination" (p. 41) and this is the main secret of Iago's success; to it is added merely "a trivial tale of a handkerchief" (p. 64). Incidentally the author prints the lines of this famous scene at the bottom of the page so that the reader can follow his commentary more readily. At the end "Iago has won what he set out to win and more" (p. 67); at the end of the next scene Desdemona—"selfless, high-minded, reasonable of heart" (p. 76)—has lost all. "Othello collapses babbling, *in a trance,* at Iago's feet" (p. 78) and the overhearing scene—"most puerile of tricks"—reduces Othello "to the very depth of indignity" (p. 82).

Here Mr. Granville-Barker introduces another "Parenthesis: The Use of Ludivico: The Action Advancing of its own Momentum" to explain the interconnection of subsequent scenes of the play, which he then takes up in detail. "With Ludivico's arrival the play enters a penultimate phase . . . of suspense, enriching of character, of full preparation for the long last scene" (p. 89). Two scenes, the "brothel scene" and "that of the 'Willow Song'" are "not necessary to the action at all" (p. 90), and Iago's "own undoing has begun." The "brothel scene" brings out Desdemona's "spontaneous candour" and the 'Willow-Song' scene evolves her "too absolute goodness" (p. 106). With the beginning of Avt V "Iago Begins to Bungle" in disposing of Roderigo and Cassio, and the final scene "falls into three sections: the first filled by Desdemona's murder, the second by the discovery of Iago's guilt and the killing of Emilia, the third by Othello's orientation to his own end" (p. 115). Here Mr. Granville-Barker again resorts to printing the text at the bottom of the page. The Moor has now disintegrated into "a terrible, shameful spectacle" (p. 116), yet "From the wreck of the Othello that was emerges a man who is both the victim and the creature of the deed" (p. 123). The final "Parenthesis" explains that the dramatist must restore Othello "as much to himself, and to such a consciousness of himself, as will give significance to his

end, . . . without pursuing the action beyond appropriate bounds" (pp. 128-9). The author's style fairly flashes through his last section, the "Analysis of the Action, Concluded," and Emilia and Ludivico are given full credit for their part in it. One finishes this long second chapter with a distinct feeling that the author has persistently probed his way through the motives and actions and thrown vivid light on the whole action of the play.

The rest of the book is not quite so important, though chapter IV on "The Characters" shapes up well. On "Act and Scene Division" Mr. Granville-Barker is pretty indefinite, but each character in the play subsequently gets some detailed treatment. Iago is a "stupid fellow" with a "common mind," who is an artist and actor in deviltry for its own sake: at times he gets "a very revelation . . . sent direct from the Devil himself" (p. 163). He is beyond a theatrical type, but his hate "is cold . . . and motiveless" (pp. 167 and 172) . . . "he reminds us rather . . . of a hound on a trail, sensitive and alert, nose to the mud, searching and sampling, appetite and instinct combining to guide him past error after error to his quarry" (p. 172). Othello is free from jealousy (at the start), "he is black" (p. 178), "a quite exceptional man," "a dangerously defenceless . . . enraptured bridegroom" (p. 179), with "a quick and powerful imagination" (p. 180)—"the poet born" (p. 181). But the tragedy as a whole "is without meaning" (p. 175), for it falls "short of serving for the purgation of our souls . . . " (p. 1743. (One may not agree always with this analysis but at least it is stimulating.) Desdemona has already been touched upon above, but now Mr. Granville-Barker emphasizes her "explicit calm" and her "rare fervour" (p. 186). Her one "scared fib about the handkerchief" he discounts in favor of her "essential honesty" (p. 190). "Emilia is coarse clay" (p. 191), with a "closed mind," but "she gives her life in testimony of the dead Desdemona's innocence" (p. 197). Bianca is a "little hussy," but "shrewd and witty"—and "plucky." Brabantio "swings between extremes"; Cassio, "impulsive," is "caught between tragic extremes" (p. 201), yet "there is something

boyish about him, and appealing." Roderigo is "an incorrigible fool" (p. 206).

The last chapter points out Shakspere's freedom from the trammels of rules of verse (as he was from Jonson's dramatic formulae) and adds up the three main "attributes of the maturer verse": "The enriched vocabulary, the bolder syntax, the unconfined rhythm" (p. 216). Mr. Granville-Barker spends some time on the characters' repetition of words, and on the "tone and rhythm" of the speeches, with Othello's dominating most of the rest in these qualities. The "opposing factor" to Othello in this scene is Iago, with his "forceful rhythm and lack of all melody" (p. 217). (This speech-rhythm point, incidentally, is a very interesting modern development, in Shaksperian criticism.) Iago is now "only a poisoned and poisonous ganglion of cravings after evil," concludes Mr. Granville-Barker.

In Note A Othello "is a black man." In Note B he is a Christian. So much for a summary of the book.

The above outline has been developed deliberately with reference always to the basic problems of and points of interest in the play, *Othello*: Iago's motives, Othello's predisposition to jealousy, the time scheme, Desdemona's intellect, Othello's color, etc., etc. On all these, as indicated above, Mr. Granville-Barker has stated his position unequivocally. We may not agree with him but at least we know where he stands. But the strange thing is that one of the best parts of the book—perhaps the best—has not been discussed yet at all—namely the footnotes. There are some 35 footnotes in the book that are of considerable importance. Those on textual problems are rather negligible (pp. 59n, 88n, 95n, 107n, 109n, 112n, 116n, 121n, etc.). For example, he says, rather plaintively on p. 211: "The episode of the apparitions and Jupiter's descent has, I know, been labelled spurious. But, in its main lines at least, it may, I think, be called Shakespeare's . . ." But once he points out a textual error (p. 112n), twice he declares for an actor's interpolation (pp. 59n and 121n), and once again he asserts there has been a cut in the text (p. 58). He makes no de-

tailed comparisons of Q + G readings,[3] nor does he note the mixup of prose and verse now and then.[4]

But the important footnotes concern Mr. Granville-Barker's chief forte in Shaksperian criticism—his knowledge of the stage and stage business. Time and again in the footnotes—and also in the text at times—he points out how a scene should be acted, how Shakspere used his special stage, etc. For instance, "For his soliloquy he will advance to the front of the main stage; Desdemona and the rest will go towards or into the inner stage, the pictorial effect being of a fully rounded statue placed before a bas-relief" (p. 19n). "And nothing can be plainer, by Elizabethan stagecraft, than the indication of a (this much interrupted) passage here from outer stage to inner, with Othello's passage across the outer stage . . . for a connecting link" (p. 32n).[5] As for his accent on the actor's problems, note: "Actors of Iago are accustomed to put their foot for a moment, upon the prostrate body, even to give it a slight, contemptuous kick. This is wholly appropriate" (p. 79n) . . . "Othello shall enter with the light illuminating his face; and the steadiness with which he carries the (presumably) naked candle does something to emphasise the abnormal calm which gives dramatic distinction to his appearance" (p. 116n).[6] This is all excellent historical criticism—the author's best type—and should be added to the study of the source, in Chapter I.

Twice, at least, Mr. Granville-Barker admits that Shakspere may have made a slight error himself. Of the resurrection of Roderigo from the stabbing by Iago, he remarks: "But I suspect this to have been an afterthought on Shakespeare's part" (pp. 108-9); and of Desdemona's kneeling to Iago, "It may well seem that Shakespeare has here stretched a psychological point in his wish to complete the pattern of Iago's triumph . . ." (p. 188n). But this is as close as Mr. Granville-Barker gets to modern sceptical criticism—both times in footnotes, be it noted. (As a matter of fact, the author himself stretches psychology a bit on pp. 41, 161, and 166.)

On the negative side of the ledger, I suppose something might be said. The London *Times Literary Supplement* (June 8, 1946) was horrified that Mr. Granville-Barker had Othello collapse "babbling . . . at Iago's feet" (p. 178) but, for that matter, Othello "jabbered" on p. 92 and was "a terrible, shameful spectacle" on p. 116. To call Iago a "stupid fellow" (p. 160) seems to fly in the face of countless previous critics—Mr. Kittredge used to mention his "infernal astuteness"—but Mr. Granville-Barker is not interested in such predecessors; he mentions only five by name in the entire book (plus two editors);[7] yet I think he uses Miss Spurgeon directly on p. 216 and some one like Mr. Stoll on p. 157n and possibly on pp. 171-2. Only one actor —Salvini—is mentioned in the book, and no American scholars at all. Just how he could entirely overlook Stoll's monograph on *Othello,* particularly with reference to those famous 300 lines, is a problem, but English critics have done such things before. My own teacher, Mr. Kittredge, used to dilate at length on Shakspere's art in keeping Desdemona, Cassio and Othello apart throughout the latter half of the play, but Mr. Granville-Barker makes little of this (p. 97).

But the most astonishingly questionable aspect of this book, I suspect, is the author's flippant attitude toward Iago's soliloquies. The first two he skips entirely.[8] The third one interests him mainly because of its "technical utility" (p. 24)—it fills a gap. The fourth one "is the conclusive passage in the evolving of Iago's character. It is evil for its own sake that he starts pursuing now" (p. 28). The purely expository one in Act IV, Sc. 1, he jumps right over again, together with the one in Act. V, Sc. 1. "...we listen to those many soliloquies in vain" (p. 158), he concludes. Mr. Schücking and Mr. Stoll will both throw up their hands in horror.

Yet, verily, as the length of this review testifies, the book is a stimulating piece of criticism. I wish Mr. Granville-Barker could have seen Ferrer's *humorous* Iago!

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[1]In the *Shakespeare Association Bulletin,* October, 1931.
[2]He uses dashes far too much for somewhat involved parentheses. See my next quotation, for example.
[3]Cf. *Parla,* Sept., 1932 and Sept., 1934. But see *his* pp. 88n, 107n, 109n, 116n, 121n.
[4]I,3,c.210-30; II,1,c120-45; IV,3.
[5]See also pp. 14, 24, 34, 39n, 109, 110n, 111n, etc.
[6]See pp. 27, 29, 34, 6[1], 70, 75, 96n, 102-3, etc.
[7]E. K. Chambers, p. vii. Johnson, pp. 10-11. Bradley, p. 157n. Swinburne and Hazlitt, p. 160. Dyce and Collier, p. 122n.
[8]I,3,c.374ff; II,1,c.272ff.

# MODERN STAGE-DIRECTIONS IN SHAKSPERE

By Richard Flatter

THE other day, glancing through a modern edition of *Richard II* (The New Shakespeare, Cambridge) I came across the stage-direction:

> Bolingbroke and Northumberland, marching with forces up a hill

and shortly afterwards:

> Harry Percy comes over the crest of the hill.

"Forces marching up a hill—coming over the crest of the hill": what am I reading, I asked myself: Shakspere's play or the script of a film version of it?

Following that, several more questions cropped up. Is it the editor's task to give his phantasy the reins and, by way of stage-directions, to produce the play for the benefit of his reader whom he does not trust to have any imagination of his own? Is the editor free to insert as many directions as he can think of? Are we to take his whims and visions as authentic? What authority does he claim beyond that of being a Shaksperian scholar? Where did he serve his apprenticeship as a stage-producer that he should allow himself to mingle his own stage-craft with Shakspere's? And if an editor thinks he must combine editing the play with producing it, is he to produce the play as he thinks it was done at the Globe three hundred years ago, or as he apparently yearns to produce it himself at the Haymarket to-morrow?

Yet, someone might interject, perhaps those directions are exceptions only, occasional excrescences of a film-infected fancy. They are not. In *A Midsummer-Night's Dream,* in the same edition, we find stage-directions such as this:

> The air is heavy with the scent of blossom

or:

> Wall steps three paces forward.

In *Hamlet* the editor orders Hamlet and Horatio to retire when, in the graveyard-scene, Ophelia in her coffin is brought in:

> They sit in the shade of a cypress.

The question is not only whether a cypress is a plausible suggestion in as northern a country as Denmark, but also whether it is proper for anybody to be seated during a burial ceremony. Or what are we to think of the same editor's direction in the fencing-scene?

> Claudius, very pale, totters to his feet.

Tottering? Very well. But how is the actor to turn "very pale" under his make-up? Or a direction such as this:

> Of a sudden Oberon, Titania and the fairy-host stream into the hall, with rounds of waxen tapers on their heads, which they swiftly kindle at the hearth as they pass it by, until the great chamber is full of light.

As far as this goes, it is an excellent idea, and probably feasible, in a film; but on the stage—? The host of fairies, passing by the hearth, each of them taking down from their heads their "rounds of tapers," stooping to the fire, "kindling" them, replacing them on their heads and passing on to make room for the next fairy: I wonder what a stage-producer could make of the idea.

And yet the question is not so much whether such features of stage-production are or are not practicable, but whether such collaboration with the author is permissible.

In the "True Originall Copies" there are no indications of place, either in the Quartos or in the Folio. (The Folio, as a matter of fact, has two place indications, but each is for the whole play: in *The Tempest*: "The Scene, an vn-inhabited Island" and in *Measure for Measure*: "The Scene Vienna".) It was Rowe who first, in 1709, erected all those signposts: "A platform before the castle—Another part of the platform—A room in the castle—and so on. Pope, in 1725, added to them, and from then onwards they have been accepted and reproduced almost unchanged.

These indications do scarcely any harm, as fortunately nobody takes any notice of them even if he reads them. Certainly no producer has ever allowed himself to be swayed by them. Yet even those superfluous, though at all events modest wordings have in those latest editions been augmented and elaborated. For "A platform before the castle" we read now:

> A narrow platform upon the battlements; turret-doors to right and left.

Before Puck and the Fairy meet, the scene has been given as: "A wood near Athens"; now we read:

> The palace wood, a league from Athens. A mossy stretch of broken ground, cleared of trees by wood-cutters and surrounded by thickets. Moonlight.

Or instead of "Another part of the wood. Enter Titania with her Train" we are given the following:

> Another part of the wood. A grassy plot before a great oak-tree; behind the tree a high bank overhung with creepers, and at one side a thorn-bush. The air is heavy with the scent of blossom . . . Titania lies couched in her bower beneath the bank; her fairies attending her.

Do we need any of these place indications, either Penny Plain or Tuppence Coloured? Why should the modern reader be regarded as less imaginative than his ancestor? Besides, is it not still true what Hamlet says about the actors: "We shall know by these fellows; the players cannot keep counsel"? When we are told by them: " 'Tis now struck twelve" or "The air bites shrewdly," we know it is midnight, and a cold night. Or when the King with his Queen and his councillors enter, we are justified in assuming that the scene is not meant to be the street: and that is about all we need to know. What is necessary for us to know is said in the text itself; and what it does not say is not necessary.

The stage-directions proper propound a more difficult problem. There are, first, what I should like to call Prompter's Directions and, second, Producer's Directions. The former are those needed for the performance to run

smoothly; without them the performance, and indeed the play itself, would not be complete. They come necessarily from the author's pen, and are indispensable accessories to the text. Owing to their purely technical nature, however, they have no bearing on the quality of the production. Prompter's directions are: entries and exits; indications when a person is wounded or dies; noises on or behind the scene, such as "Flourish for the players" or "soldiers are heard marching"; or instructions such as "pours the poison in his ears" or "they play," etc. Directions of that kind are parts, as it were, of the stage mechanism only, can therefore or even ought to be corrected if they prove to be faulty: if misplaced they should be set right, etc.

Yet they should not be elaborated. When Polonius is killed there is no stage-direction in either of the Quartos. The Folio has two words only: "Killes Polonius." That was regarded as sufficiently clear — until in 1768 Capell added the direction for Hamlet: "Makes a pass through the arras." Later we find the instruction for Polonius: "Falls and dies," and finally that for Hamlet: "Lifts up the arras and discovers Polonius"— to which the editor of *The New Shakespeare* deems it necessary to add the elucidative word: "dead." One feels tempted to quote Prince Hall: "O monstrous! eleven buckram men grown out of two!"

Producer's directions are of a different type. They are symptoms and products of an art that lies beyond the mere text, something that adds to the bare action. In them the author visualizes and demands certain subtleties of the performance. They are scattered pieces of advice to the actor, instructions such as: "smiling" or "suspiciously shaking his head" or "pacing up and down in excitement." From Mr. Bernard Shaw's plays we know what they can be. In Shakspere they are so rare that one can almost say they are non-existent.

That is not difficult to understand. As the producer was identical with the author, for whom should he have taken the trouble of writing down how he wanted the play to be produced? Moreover, in view of the rival companies it was certainly wiser to say in the script as little as possible about

the details of production: the performances themselves revealed enough to the greedily observant eyes and ears of unwanted spies. Thus in the genuine plays we find none but prompter's directions, whereas for the producer's directions we have to search the Quartos. One may go so far as to say that, if a Quarto contains producer's directions, this in itself can be taken as proof that the edition is a piratical one. In fact, all producer's directions that we find in the Quartos show clearly that they are notes taken during the actual performances.

While the Folio test of *Hamlet* contains not a single direction besides those of the prompter's type, we find in Quarto 1: "Enter Ophelia, playing on a lute, and her hair down, singing." The text itself has nothing to indicate either the lute or that her hair is "down": yet thus the scene was obviously acted, otherwise the pirate could not have observed the detail. In Quarto 2 we find: "It (the Ghost) spreads his arms"— another detail of the actual performance. Quarto 1 of *Romeo and Juliet* contains a number of producer's directions: "Enter Juliet somewhat fast, and embraceth Romeo"; "Enter Nurse wringing her hands"; "Nurse offers to go and turns again," and others.

Confronted with that dearth of stage-directions, and yet feeling that some ought to be added to the text, what have Rowe, Pope, Warburton, and other editors done? Have they turned to the Quartos and taken such directions as they could find there: directions which, after all, have at least semi-authorrity, going back as they do to Shakspere's own productions? No, they brushed them aside and inserted directions of their own making. Almost all are superfluous, as they merely repeat what is said in the text clearly enough; some are pedantic, some tedious, though on the whole innocuous. What, however, have those modern editors done with them?

For the simple "exit" of the True Original Copies we find in that edition of *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* the following paraphrases:

> "bows and departs — goes — departs in anger — vanishes—follows after—disappears into the wood —exit into the brake — they all run away and hide

> them in the bushes — pursues them — turns and flees — they move towards the bower — hurries away — turns into the woods — hastens after — runs off — follows slowly — they hurry forth — they pass out," etc.

To transform the mere "exit" into all sorts and ways of getting off the stage is a very necessary job for the producer of the play, but not for its editor. The reader should not be confused with the onlooker; and the reader is not helped but hampered in his own imagination by the "Presenter's" continuously raised finger.

In addition to prompter's directions we find newly inserted instructions also of the producer's type.

> Egeus enters, haling along his daughter Hermia by the arm

It may be done like that, and usually is; but on whose authority is a direction like that put into the text itself? The procedure, moreover, seems rather undignified: an English lord would hardly have *dragged* his daughter into his king's presence. Or in III.i. the direction is added:

> Quince takes an almanac from his bag and searches therein.

An unhappy delay. Moreover, the text does not bear it out. As Quince mentions "moonshine," Snout asks: "Doth the moon shine that night we play our play?" — whereupon Bottom, the busybody, breaks in by calling out for an almanac; Quince, however, angry at the unnecessary interruption, replies—and he does not answer Bottom, of whom he has had enough by now, but Snout: "Yes," (I know it for certain, I've made sure of it beforehand) "it doth shine that night." That does not only conform to the text, Quince's words being a direct, if somewhat delayed answer to Snout's question; it also is in accord with the situation: why should Quince take an almanac into the wood? My interpretation may be wrong; but who is prepared to maintain that the other is the only correct one? Neither mine nor the other commentary can claim to have authority; neither therefore should be allowed to masquerade as a stage-direction and intrude itself into the text.

In the *Hamlet* edition we find in the closet-scene the instruction for Hamlet:

> Leads her to the portraits on the wall.

In the Appendix it is said that those two pictures are "full-length portraits." That seems to me to be wrong beyond any doubt. In the 19 lines in which Hamlet speaks of the two pictures he uses the word "this" 8 times, the word "here" twice; not once does he say "that" or "there." Moreover, where in the Globe theatre should the two "full-length portraits" have been hung up? There are other reasons against the probability of large-size portraits, but the strongest proof seems to be found in *Timon of Athens* (I.i.) where The Painter carries with him certainly not a big canvas, but a miniature. In line 160 the expression "Pensil'd Figures" is used. Now, "pencilled" does not mean "painted," as C. T. Onions in his *Glossary* maintains, but is a technical term for "limning": i.e. "making miniatures." Nicholas Hillyarde, the famous "limner" of both Elizabeth and James, describes in his *Treatise concerning the Arte of Limning* his technique as working "not with the flat of the pensel as in oyle worke, distemper, or washing, but with the pointe of the pencell by lyttel light touches with cullor very thine." If we see then that miniatures are mentioned in *Timon* and that, moreover, Hamlet himself (in II.ii.369) speaks in the closet-scene, too, it is miniatures to which he refers.

There are other arbitrary additions, such as in IV.vii. 161:

> The Queen enters weeping.

That is before Gertrude delivers her highly coloured report on how Ophelia met her death. Many reasons, chiefly textual ones, can be brought forth against the assumption of the Queen's "weeping." But once more: the question is not so much whether or not an augmentation or elaboration of the few original stage-directions is justifiable, but rather whether augmenting and elaborating them is permissible: i.e. whether an editor should take the liberty to sit as it

were side by side with Shakspere himself, or even on occasion to push him aside and occupy his chair.

To put that question is to answer it. When I read Shakspere, which means when he speaks to me, I do not wish to be interrupted; nor does he. Majesties should be listened to in silence. I do not wish a loud-speaker continually to break into that quiet discourse, telling me not only what the author means or intends to say, but also how he visualizes each single scene to be performed. Which "he": the editor or Shakspere? That is exactly the question.

The editor of a Shakspere play should not regard it as his task to save the modern producer any of his troubles by preparing a stage-book for him. He should not look towards a future performance, but look back to the performances at the Globe or Blackfriars. As little as he would dream of altering a single word, should he alter the stage-directions or add to them. Stage-directions are an integral part of the text itself: their lack should no less be respected than their presence.

# DICKENS' KNOWLEDGE OF SHAKSPERE

By Edward P. Vandiver, Jr.

In his *Cavalcade of the English Novel* Edward Wagenknecht writes of Dickens: "He knew the *Bible, The Arabian Nights,* Shakspere (superficially), Ben Jonson, Carlyle best of all among contemporaries."[1]

In the interest of accuracy this statement should be reexamined. The sentence implies that of the five works or authors named, only Shakspere was known superficially. What evidence is there, for instance, that Dickens knew Ben Jonson better than Shakspere? And, secondly, is *superficial* an accurate word to describe Dickens' Knowledge of Shakspere?

One of the best proofs of Dickens' deep appreciation of Shaksperian tragedy is his article in the *Examiner* (Feb. 4, 1838), "The Restoration of Shakespeare's *Lear* to the Stage," in praise of Macready's presentation of the genuine article instead of Nahum Tate's version.[2] After referring to some of the great Lears from Betterton to Kean and denouncing Tate, Dickens praises the Fool and other aspects of the play, including the following words:

> The Fool in the tragedy of *Lear* is one of the most wonderful creations of Shakspere's genius. The picture of his quick and pregnant sarcasm, of his loving devotion, of his acute sensibility, of his despairing mirth, of his heartbroken silence—contrasted with the rigid sublimity of Lear's suffering, with the huge desolation of Lear's sorrow, with the vast and outraged image of Lear's madness—is the noblest thought that ever entered into the heart and mind of man . . .
>
> The Fool in *Lear* is the solitary instance of such a character, in all the writings of Shakspere, being identified with the pathos and passion of the scene. He is interwoven with Lear, he is the link that still associates him with Cordelia's love and the presence of the regal estate he has surrendered. The rage of the wolf Goneril is first stirred by a report that her favorite gentleman had been struck by her father "for chiding of his fool . . ."
>
> The finest passage of Mr. Macready's scenes upon the heath is his remmembrance of the "poor naked wretches," wherein a new world seems indeed to have broken upon his mind . . . Mr. Macready's representation of the father at the end . . . completed the only perfect picture that we have had of Lear since the age of Betterton.

A paper, published five years later (March 4, 1843) on "Macready as Benedick," shows detailed knowledge of *Much Ado about Nothing*.[3] A few excerpts from this follow:

> First impressions, too, even with persons of a cultivated understanding, have an immense effect in settling their notions of a character; and it is no heresy to say that many people unconsciously form their opinion of such a creation as Benedick, not so much from the exercise of their own judgment in reading the play, as from what they have seen bodily presented to them on the stage . . .
>
> We can imagine no purer or higher piece of genuine comedy than Mr. Macready's performance of the scene in the orchard after emerging from the arbour . . .
>
> Claudio, in the gay and gallant scenes, has an efficient representative in Mr. Anderson; but his perfect indifference to Hero's supposed death is an imputation on his good sense . . . Mr. Compton has glimpses of Dogberry, though iron was never harder than he. If he could but derive a little oil from his contact with Keeley (whose utter absorption in his learned neighbor is amazing), he would become an infinitely better leader of the Prince's Watch.

Twenty-six years later (August, 1869), writing to introduce Fechter to America, he published in the *Atlantic Monthly* an essay "On Mr. Fechter's Acting." Parts of his vigorous discussion of Iago and Hamlet follow:[4]

> That quality of picturesqueness, on which I have already laid stress, is strikingly developed in his Iago, and yet it is so judiciously governed that his Iago is not in the least picturesque according to the conventional ways of frowning, sneering, diabolically grinning, and elaborately doing everything else that would induce Othello to run him through the body very early in the play. Mr. Fechter's is the Iago who could, and did, make friends; who could dissect his master's soul without flourishing the scalpel as if it were a walking-stick . . .
>
> From the first appearance of the broken glass of fashion and mould of form, pale and worn from weeping for his father's death, and remotely suspicious of its cause, to his final struggle with Horatio for the fatal cup, there were cohesion and coherence in Mr. Fechter's view of the character. Devrient, the German actor, had, some years before in London, fluttered the theatrical doves considerably, by such changes as being seated when instructing the players, and like mild departures from established usage; but he had worn, in the main, the old nondescript dress, and had held forth, in the main, in the old way, hovering between sanity and madness. I do not remember whether he wore his hair crisply curled short, as if he were going to an everlasting dancing-master's party at the Danish court; but I do remember that most other

> Hamlets since the great Kemble had been bound to do so. Mr. Fechter's Hamlet, a pale woe-begone Norseman with long flaxen hair, wearing a strange garb never associated with the part upon the English stage... never could have achieved its extraordinary success but for its animation by one pervading purpose, to which all changes were made intelligently subservient.

One of Dickens' most significant utterances about his reading of Shakspere is in a letter written during his first American tour in 1842, when he was thirty: "Talking of *Hamlet,* I constantly carry in my great-coat pocket the Shakspere you bought for me in Liverpool. What an unspeakable source of delight that book is to me."[5] And apparently Dickens read not only the text but also some of the notes. For such reading must have prompted him to write to his friend, John Forster, some years later:

> If I had no *Dombey,* I could write and finish the story with the bloom on—but there's the rub... Which unfamiliar quotation reminds me of a Shaksperian (put an *e* before the *s*; I like it much better) speculation of mine. What do you say to "take arms against a sea of troubles" having been originally written "make arms," which is the action of swimming. It would get rid of a horrible grievance in the figure, and make it plain and apt. I think of setting up a claim to live in The House at Stratford rent-free, on the strength of this suggestion.[6]

In his *Pictures from Italy* (published in 1846) Dickens intertwines thoughts about Shakspere's characters in his remarks. For instance, he begins one chapter thus: "I had been half afraid to go to Verona, lest it should put me out of conceit with *Romeo and Juliet.*"[7] But it did not; he fell in love with the place. "I read *Romeo and Juliet* in my own room at the inn that night—of course, no English-man had ever read it there, before—and set out for Mantua next day at sunrise, repeating to myself

> There is no world without Verona's walls
> But purgatory, torture, hell itself.
> Hence-banishëd is banish'd from the world,
> And world's exile is death—

which reminded me that Romeo was only banished five-and twenty miles after all, and rather disturbed my confidence in his energy and boldness."[8] The same chapter Dickens closes with an amusing reference to *The Taming of the Shrew*: "Like Grumio, I might have told you, in detail, all

this and something more—but to as little purpose—were I not deterred by the remembrance that my business is with Italy. Therefore, like Grumio's story, "it shall die in oblivion."[9]

Dickens often quotes Shakspere. In the Preface to *Barnaby Rudge* he writes: "He had from the first, as Sir Hugh Evans says of Ann Page, 'good gifts'."[10] In the Preface to *Bleak House* occur these not-so-well-known lines from *Sonnet CXI*:

> My nature is subdued
> To what it works in, like the dyer's hand:
> Pity me, then, and wish I were renew'd.[11]

His disparaging comments on Henry Colman's *European Life and Manners,* published as a book review, includes a paraphrase of Hotspur's speech:

> He talks so like a waiting gentlewoman,
> Of napkins, forks, and spoons (God save the mark!)[12]

Writing to Forster about their climbing a steep path, he says: "I grovelled and clung to the soil like a Caliban, and you, in the manner of a tricksy spirit and stout Ariel, actually danced up and down before me."[13] Again, after puzzling over what title he should give to one of his stories, Dickens wrote Forster a letter consisting of one sentence: "We have heard the CHIMES at midnight, Master Shallow!"[14]

In the first number of his magazine *Household Words* Dickens announced as one of his purposes: "to people the sick room with airy shapes 'that give delight and hurt not'."[15] Also he wrote: "The stones that call to us have sermons in them, as the trees have tongues, as there are books in the running brooks, as there is good in everything."[16] Nine years later, when he was about to start a new magazine, he tried to find a title in Shakspere. First he thought he would use the title *Household Harmony,* taking the two words from 3 *Henry VI,* where the King compares himself to captive birds:

> At last by notes of household harmony
> They quite forget their loss of liberty.[17]

Later, however, Dickens decided against this title, although

he still wished one derived from Shakspere. A few days later he wrote: "I have just hit upon a name that I think really an admirable one—especially with the quotation *before* it . . .

"'*The story of our lives, from year to year.*'—
SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A weekly journal conducted by Charles Dickens."[18]

Finally, one should remember that Dickens, who was fond of appearing in amateur theatricals, played the part of Justice Shallow in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* with great success, appearing in this role at least nine times, once before Queen Victoria.[19]

This brief study does not attempt to point out all the Shaksperian elements and references in Dickens—for example, the rehearsal of *Romeo and Juliet* in *Nicholas Nickleby* and the satire on the pretentious Shaksperian scholar and critic, Mr. Curdle, in the same novel. It does attempt to prove, however, that Dickens was deeply interested in Shakspere and that his knowledge of Shakspere was more than "superficial."

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[1](New York, Holt, 1943), p. 221.
[2]*The Works of Charles Dickens* (New York, Scribners, 1911), XXXV, 77-81.
[3]*Ibid.*, pp. 99-102.
[4]*Ibid.*, pp. 71-72.
[5]John Forster, *The Life of Charles Dickens,* ed. by J. W. T. Ley (New York, Doran, n.d.), p. 241.
[6]*Ibid.*, p. 466.
[7]Dickens, XXVIII, 402.
[8]*Ibid.*, p. 405.
[9]*Ibid.*, p. 419.
[10]Dickens, XII, p. x.
[11]Dickens, XVI, p. vii.
[12]Dickens, XXXV, 165.
[13]Forster, p. 289.
[14]*Ibid.*, p. 346.
[16]*Ibid.*, p. 183.
[17]Forster, p. 671.
[18]*Ibid.*, p. 672.
[15]Dickens, XXXV, 182.
[19]*Ibid.*, p. 469.

# THE PORTRAYAL OF WOMAN IN THE COMEDIES OF NATHAN FIELD

By William Peery

SO long as it was thought that Nathan Field, author of *A Woman Is a Weathercock* (1608)[1] and *Amends for Ladies* (1611), was married,[2] unfaithful,[3] and inordinately jealous,[4] it was not unnatural that writers on his plays interpret autobiographically his satirical treatment of woman.[5] Present knowledge of Field's life, however, no longer leaves much room for such an interpretation. Yet even the scholar who finally established the separate identities of the married Nathaniel and the unmarried Nathan still speaks of Field's "personal animus toward women."[6] The purposes of the present paper are, first, to study the portrayal of women in Field's plays and, second, to say anything that may safely be said about Field's personal attitude toward women.

If Field's literary treatment of woman is not to be connected with his biography, it may be well to place it very briefly against the background of seventeenth-century literature. Though satire on women is to be found nearly everywhere one finds satire,[7] Field's satire on this subject seems unlikely to have had deep roots. He need have drawn on no older[8] or more widespread tradition than that found in the drama of his own day. Field's antifeminism is not unlike that of Jonson. Writing on native elements in the latter, Baskervill finds the coarseness and vulgarity of most of Jonson's feminine portraits

> inherited from the fabliaux and from medieval realism in general, at a time when the crude form of living developed the coarsest types of men and women. . . . This folk attitude to women as witches, shrews, and alewives, as coarse, vulgar, and sensual, reveals itself continually in Jonson's work, and indicates his social inheritance and sympathies.[9]

Miss Brinkley points out the closeness with which the antifeminist attitude toward women in Field's plays resembles that in some of Chapman's.[10] Particularly important in this connection is *The Widow's Tears* (1605), in which Field probably had acted.[11] The cynical realism of Tharsalio's wit may have given Field the cue for Scudmore's most

bitter denunciation of Bellafront;[12] his frank, loveless, bold wooing of Eudora, that for Bold's wooing of the Widow in *Amends for Ladies*.[13] Professor Parrott believes *The Widow's Tears* to be

> the product of a mood of pessimism that had come over Chapman as he viewed the swift decadence of his age. The mood was not permanent, but it rendered him incapable henceforth of viewing the follies and vices of the world as a mere laughing matter, and prepared the way for the grave morality and the lofty idealism of his tragedies.[14]

Of a different moral and intellectual stamp from Chapman, Field seems to have been little distressed by the view of women he presents. He could, with Fletcher, show woman as a weak vessel, certain to be cast, and at the same time pay striking if purely formal[15] homage to her virtue. Field could write, in *A Woman Is a Weathercock*,

> Why am I thus rewarded?—women! women!
> He's mad, by heaven, that thinks you anything
> But sensual monsters, and is never wise
> Nor good, but when he hates you, as I now.
> I'll not come near one—none of your base sex
> Shall know me from this time; for all your virtues
> Are like the buzzes growing in the fields,
> So weakly fastened t'ye by Nature's hand
> That thus much wind blows all away at once.
> Ye fillers of the world with bastardy,
> Worse than diseases ye are subject to,
> Know, I do hate you all: will write against you,
> And fight against you: I will eat no meat
> Dressed by a woman, old or young, nor sleep
> Upon a bed made by their stealthy hands.[16]

One of Field's major sustained passages of invective against women is this from the same play:

> O woman, woman, woman, woman, woman!
> The cause of future and original sin,
> How happy, (had you not) should we have been!
> False, where you kiss, but murdering in your ire;
> Love all can woo, know all men you desire:
> Ungrateful, yet most impudent to crave,
> Torturous as hell, insatiate as the grave:
> Lustful as monkeys, grinning in your ease,
> Whom if we make not idols, we ne'er please:
> More vainly proud than fools, as ignorant;
> Baser than parasites: witches that enchant
> And make us senseless. . . .[17]

There is more in this rhetorical vein; yet at the end of the play, when the three young men have won the hands of the three daughters of Sir John Worldly, Field could write also the words of Scudmore,

> And may all true love have like happy end.
> Women, forgive me; men, admire my friend. [18]

Field could write, also, on the other side of the question, as in these words of his Wife in *Amends for Ladies*:

> O men! what are you? why is our poor sex
> Still made the degraded subjects in these plays
> For vices, folly, and inconstancy:
> When, were men looked into with such critical eyes
> Of observation, many would be found
> So full of gross and base corruption,
> That none (unless the devil himself turned writer)
> Could feign so badly to express them truly?
>
> \- - -
>
> O, let me stand,
> Thou God of marriage and chastity,
> An honour to my sex! no injury
> Compel the virtue of my breast to yield!
> It's not revenge for any wife to stain
> The nuptial bed, although she be yoked ill.
> Who falls, because her husband so hath done,
> Cures not his wound, but in herself makes one. [19]

Confronting such contradictions in Field, critics—and it is small wonder—have disagreed as to Field's literary treatment of women.[20] The antifeminist load of Field's satire is paralleled, perhaps equalized, by a feminist load. The traditional way out of this difficulty has been to speak of the connection of Field's two plays as companion pieces. Into that subject we need go further.

Langbaine early pointed out[21] that *Amends for Ladies* was written as a kind of apology for *A Woman Is a Weathercock*; and Field himself contributed to the notion that his two comedies were in the nature of an indictment and defense. In the epistle, "To Any Woman That Hath Been No Weathercock," prefaced to the first play, Field makes the following offer:

> . . . I leave a liberty to any lady or woman, that dares say she hath been no weathercock, to assume the title of patroness to this my book. If she have been constant, and be so, all I will expect from

> her for my pains is that she will continue so but till my next play be printed, wherein she shall see what amends I have made to her and all the sex. . . . [22]

From this statement and other evidence[23] we know that *Amends for Ladies* was certainly planned and written, and probably acted, by the end of 1611. The two plays may have been intended as companion pieces from the time of inception of *A Woman Is a Weathercock.* Scholars were right, therefore, to treat the two comedies as companion works as they have done. "In order to make 'Amends,' " wrote Ward, "to a sex never very tolerant of satire against itself, Field . . . produced his other comedy."[24] "The object of the play," Collier writes of *Amends for Ladies,* "was to vindicate the female sex, attacked in 'Woman is a Weathercock'; and it is accomplished amply and happily in the persons of the Maid, Wife, and Widow."[25] "Soon after *Weathercock,*" writes Verity, ". . . came its antidote, the *Amends for Ladies.*"[26] The second play, according to Bayne, "was intended to atone for the many hard things said against women in the first play."[27] Miss Brinkley, finally, speaks of Field's "writing *Amends for Ladies* as an antidote for his first dramatic effort."[28] From the satirical passages already quoted, however, it should be clear that these remarks are somewhat less penetrating than they ought to be. A more discriminating view, which would lead to a better understanding both of Field's comedies as companion plays and of his portrayal of women, would take into consideration the distinction between two means by which Field or any other playwright expresses his ideology.

A playwright will, on the one hand, put desired words into the mouths of his personages or make them perform actions from which, taking them individually, we by inescapable inference will derive his thought. He will also, on the other hand, contrive a series of actions comprising what I shall call his fable,[29] which, taken integrally, embodies his ideology in narrative. The two methods do not necessarily produce the same result, as we see in connection with Field's portrayal of women. Sufficient passages have been quoted above to establish that from the standpoint of lines spoken, Field's plays are feminist as well as antifeminist.

From the standpoint of fable, the problem is more complicated.

In *A Woman Is a Weathercock Field* arranges a fable which illustrates the inconstancy of women and something more. At the opening of the play, Scudmore is reading a letter from which he and we conclude that Bellafront loves him deeply and will be his "through the world, and to the end of time."[30] Scudmore hands the letter to his friend Nevill, who upon reading it cries out, "O Heaven! we speak like gods and do like dogs";[31] for on that very day Bellafront is to marry another. Bellafront's first words in the play are in reply to Scudmore's accusation,

> Canst thou this holy church enter a bride,
> And not a corse, meeting these eyes of mine?

She answers:

> Yes, by my troth: what are your eyes to me,
> But grey ones, as they are to everybody.[32]

To the audience Bellafront at the outset is either incredible or a very false woman indeed. When she is first alone with Scudmore, she attempts to extenuate;[33] but we are likely to agree and say with Scudmore, "Pish! these are painted causes."[34] Scudmore proceeds to deliver one of the indictments of women quoted above,[35] in a passage which is one of Field's chief means of making his avowed point that woman is a weathercock. Scudmore is allowed to remain in his disillusioned state until Nevill persuades him that Bellafront may yet prove trustworthy and his.[36] Whether she is to be exonerated or not, and Field never makes her motivation very clear,[37] she is shown to be sincerely repentant for her actions and ready to prove her integrity by committing suicide[38] rather than allow her supposed marriage to Count Frederick to be consummated. When Nevill's scheme of effecting her liberation during the mask delivers her from that evil, she at once agrees to be ruled by Scudmore in all things, "even to death."[39] Of this fable, as of the plays generally, however, it should be observed that it delivers its satirical load both incidentally, as in passages or situations along the way, and integrally, as when one at the conclusion reacts to the whole. The fable pertaining to Bellafront involves situations which make the

reader consider her, for the moment, false and inconstant; but because the play in a comedy with a happy ending, the effect of the Bellafront fable considered as a whole is such as to suggest that, whatever may have caused her momentary inconstancy, Bellafront is a woman with a good heart in her pure breast. If Field's primary purpose in *A Woman Is a Weathercock* was to indict women for inconstancy, when he gave the Bellafront-Scudmore romance a happy ending he defeated his purpose.

That such was not Field's true purpose is argued by the fables he created for the other women in the play. Though the second Worldly daughter, Katherine, is said to have experienced a "sudden alteration"[40] in her attitude toward Captain Pouts, we see her treat him with nothing but contempt[41] and express her love for Strange, whom at the end of the play she marries.[42] No member of the audience is likely to think of Kate as a weathercock, even momentarily at a point along the way. Certainly the fable considered integrally does not show her to be such. Similarly, that part of the fable involving the third daughter, Lucida, establishes her constancy. Loving Count Frederick,[43] she wears the willow when it is thought he is to be married to Bellafront; [44] and when that marriage is shown not to have been binding, she marries Count Frederick.[45] Only momentarily[46] is she anything but a constant woman. In its fable, therefore, *A Woman Is a Weathercock* is, in effect, not an indictment against, but a defense of, woman; it is feminist. In only one of the three main plots, that of Bellafront, does the fable take an anti-feminist turn as the story unfolds; and considered integrally, the fable of that plot is feminist rather than antifeminist.

A revealing analogy may be drawn at this point between satirical plays such as Field's and the fiction of such contemporary American "confession" publications as *True Romances*. This type of narrative is written to a formula which might be summarized thus:

> A sincere young woman, essentially good at heart, makes mistakes in ethics which with advirable poetic justice bring upon her various calamities. Her punishments she accepts with such fortitude and spiritual valor as to constitute a triumph in character.

This is an excellent commercial formula because it gives the fable of such stories an elevated moral tone. It enables the publisher of at least one such publication to advertise that every story published has been approved as to its moral values by a recognized minister of the Gospel. It enables the readers of the magazine, on the other hand, to revel in luxurious descriptions of the mistakes in ethics, written *con amore,* for which, their pleasure being perhaps largely derived from them, readers buy the magazine. So it sometimes is with allegory and satire, and so it is here with Field, that a work considered integrally may have the opposite effect from that of one or even most of its parts. From the standpoint of fable, *A Woman Is a Weathercock* is, despite its title, an instance of feminist literature. And whose fault is it if the antifeminist episodes and satirical passages are perhaps more memorable than the feminist fable?

In what sense, then, is *Amends for Ladies* a companion piece or an antidote for *A Woman Is a Weathercock*? It is such only in the effect of its fable considered integrally. The triple story of Field's second comedy shows a Maid, a Wife, and a Widow who, tempted, are in the end found not to be weathercocks. Note that in outline this is essentially the same story as Bellafront's in *A Woman Is a Weathercock,* though in *Amends for Ladies* the men furnish greater provocation to inconstancy.

In the first of its three stories, *Amends for Ladies* presents the Maid ridiculing Ingen, whom she loves, before the Wife and Widow.[47] He makes to her an improper proposal,[48] for which she banishes him from her company. She writes to him, nevertheless, "like one mad in love"[49] and disguised as a page comes to him, apparently to describe how penitent the Maid is and to explain his banishment.[50] An added reason for her disguise, no doubt, is to determine for herself whether Ingen has, as it has been reported, married another. Ingen defeats this motive by showing her his brother Frank, disguised as his bride. All hope abandoned, the Maid as page hardly surprises us when she thereupon asks to be accepted into Ingen's service.[51] Meanwhile her brother, Lord Proudly, accuses Ingen of hiding his missing sister and of being a dissembler. Of the

latter charge Ingen proves himself innocent by unmasking his supposed bride.[52] Of course delighted that Ingen is still eligible, the Maid is constrained by her modesty from revealing her true identity. More convinced than before that the former charge is true, Proudly quarrels with Ingen, who challenges him. The Maid is thus put in a situation theatrically exquisite:

> O odious brother, if he kill my love!
> O bloody love, if he should kill my brother! [53]

The duel must be prevented at all costs. First the Maid persuades the merchant Seldom to have Proudly arrested for debt.[54] When her brother escapes, she is forced to employ the last resort of a heroine-page, to remove her disguise. Field makes amends for ladies in the account of the Maid by having Ingen call her "Most worthy pattern of all womenkind!"[55] That she continues faithful to Ingen is shown by her aside as she pretends to consent to a forced match with the old Count Feesimple arranged by her brother.[56] Here again, however, as in *A Woman Is a Weathercock,* we see Field using in his fable an incident which enables him momentarily to speak on the other side of the question. At her consent to marry Feesimple, Ingen pronounces the Maid "as false / As other ladies" and his brother exclaims, in an end-of-scene couplet carrying enough weight to make one almost forget the feminist fable,

> O ancient truth! to be denied of no man:
> An eel by the tail's held surer than a woman.[57]

But the Maid finally proves herself faithful to Ingen. On her way to her wedding with Feesimple she follows a preconceived plan to feign illness. While the wedding party are "looking in at the window,"[58] the priest who has come to shrive her marries the Maid to the doctor, really Ingen, and the marriage is consummated. Field's Maid is not only a constant woman; as a page she is a pathetic heroine, and as a partner in intrigue she is thoroughly dependable.

Field's Wife and Widow are presented throughout as unassailable. The fable which Field shapes for the former[59] presents a woman who is convinced that the estate of a wife is preferable to that of a widow or maid. When her husband,[60] groundlessly jealous, rebukes her for obeying his

instructions to befriend Subtle, whom he has prevailed upon to test his wife's honesty, she asserts her innocence.[61] Subtle and his proposals she dismisses with the temporizing promise, " 'T shall be with you, if I at all do stray"[62] and inveighs against the baseness of men in a forceful passage quoted above.[63] When Subtle claims the promise, while the Husband eavesdrops, the Wife gives him a sermon which makes clear her incorruptibility.[64] Subtle begs her pardon, and she forgives them both. The Husband sums up this part of the story at the end of the scene thus:

> Here then ends all strife.
> Thus false friends are made true by a true wife.[65]

Though quite fleshly in her speech, Field's Widow is of virtue as staunch as the Wife's. Before the play opens, the Widow has ordered Bold to remain away from her house.[66] When he gains admittance by having young Feesimple prefer him to the Widow as a waiting-woman, he attempts the Widow's seduction with every argument at his disposal. She, however, remains convincingly determined to kill him if he tries to take her by force. Finally she compels him to leave her house, refusing him even time to dress.[67] Field makes amends to ladies in the account of the Widow with Bold's line, "O widow wonderful! if thou be'st not honest."[68] These several amends to women through the fables of Maid, Wife, and Widow, moreover, are reinforced and stated theatrically when, at the end of the play, the three men call their three ladies "good" Maid, Wife, and Widow and place garlands on their heads.[69]

In the impact of their fables taken integrally, therefore, the plays of Nathan Field are seen to be on the feminist rather than the antifeminist side of the man-woman controversy. Since, however paradoxically, in its fable *A Woman Is a Weathercock* is itself an amends for ladies, one questions whether Field really wrote his second comedy to atone for the hard things said against woman in his first. In truth, it is doubtful whether equity—if Field felt the constraint of such a consideration—required that any further amends be made. From the standpoint of the separate plot events and passages spoken, perhaps *Amends for Ladies* emphasizes a very little bit more than *A Woman Is*

*a Weathercock* the feminist view—but hardly sufficiently more that the second play can be said to serve as a neutralizing agent to the first. In satirical passages, indeed, *Amends for Ladies* continues the indictment. What has previously been written about these comedies as companion pieces in their portrayal of women does not describe the true picture. Neither from the standpoint of events and satirical passages considered separately, nor from that of fables considered integrally, do the plays constitute an indictment and its antidote. They have, indeed, an identical general purpose: to portray in humorous fashion the war between the sexes. If they gave the author opportunity for attacking, along the way, both man and woman, that too was and is thought to afford amusing, effective theatre.

Does the mixed evidence, then, justify our reaching any conclusion on the second question, Field's personal attitude toward women? This much, it would seem, may safely be said. Despite his shaping in his plays fables which, taken integrally, demonstrate that woman is constant, Field can hardly be termed a feminist. To continue to regard him as an antifeminist, on the other hand, would be to persist in an erroneous oversimplification. In the absence, now, of any external evidence and in the face of his having written upon both sides of the feminist controversy, one must say that there is insufficient reason for charging Field with any "personal animus toward women." His fables, indeed, would tend to point rather in the opposite direction. I would hazard the conjecture that Field had no conviction on the man vs. woman question.[70] At the opening of Act V, Scene 2, of *Amends for Ladies,* Field has Frank read his brother Ingen's pronouncement on the subject:

> He prays no man, for his sake, evermore
> To credit woman, nor no lady ever
> To believe man; so either sex shall rest
> Uninjured by the other.[71]

This is the way of successful commercial comedy. The contemporary controversy over woman presented Field with satirical material of a popular nature. In both his plays he made full and clever, if not intellectually sincere, theatrical use of it.

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[1]Dates in parentheses after titles of dramatic works in this paper are probable dates of first production according to Alfred Harbage, *Annals of English Drama* (New York, 1941).

[2]Nathan's brother Nathaniel was married. A discovery a few years ago by Miss R. Florence Brinkley showed that Nathan was not—*Nathan Field, the Actor-Playwright* (New Haven, 1928), pp. 43f., 153.

[3]According to Sir William Trumbull, Field may have had a child "which the world sayes is daughter to my lady [Argyll]"—Edward J. L. Scott, "The Elizabethan Stage," *The Athenaeum,* 1882, Part I, 103. Not having been married, however, Field is not guilty at least of infidelity in marriage.

[4]An inference drawn from the epigram, "De Agello et Othello," J. P. Collier, *Memoirs of the Principal Actors in the Plays of Shakespeare* (London, 1846), p. 220. This poem, however, is thought to be a forgery—E. K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare* (Oxford, 1931), II, 391; Brinkley, *op. cit.,* p. 43. There is no evidence, moreover, that Field ever played Othello. Applied to an unmarried man, finally, the epigram lacks point.

[5]A. W. Verity, for example, editing Field's plays for the anthology, *Nero and Other Plays* (London, 1888), suggests that the epigram mentioned in note 4 above "may throw some light on the fierceness with which women are attacked in his two plays"—p. 335. I cite Field in Verity's edition.

[6]Brinkley, *op. cit.,* p. 46.

[7]Hugh Walker, *English Satire and Satirists* (New York, 1925), *passim;* Théodore Lee Neff, *Le Satire des Femmes dans la Poésie Lyrique Francaise du Moyen Age* (Paris, 1900); Joachim Heinrich, *Die Frauenfrage bei Steele und Addison* (*Palaestra,* CLXVIII; Leipsig, 1930), pp. 1-50.

[8]S. M. Tucker, *Verse Satire in England before the Renaissance* (New York, 1908), *passim;* Willard Thorp, "The Position of Women in the Elizabethan Drama," *The Triumph of Realism in Elizabethan Drama* (Princeton, 1928), pp. 81-120; and Louis B. Wright, "The Popular Controversy over Women," *Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England* (Chapel Hill, 1935), pp. 465-507.

[9]*English Elements in Jonson's Early Comedy* (Austin, 1911), pp. 30f.

[10]*Op. cit.,* pp. 77f.

[11]The title-page of the 1612 quarto assigns the play to the company of which Field was a leading actor.

[12]*A Woman Is a Weathercock,* III, 2; *Nero,* pp. 378-382, *passim.*

[13]IV, 1; pp. 461-465.

[14]*The Plays and Poems of George Chapman,* ed. T. M. Parrott (New York, 1910-14), II, 806.

[15]A. W. Ward, *A History of English Dramatic Literature* (2d ed.; London, 1899), II, 758.

[16]II, 1; p. 366. Similar passages are at III, 2, *passim;* pp. 378-382 and IV, 1; pp. 389, 390f.

[17]III, 2; pp. 38f.

[18]V, 2; p. 411.

[19]II, 2; p. 441.

[20]Ronald Bayne finds one of the merits of *Amends* to be that in it Field "cherishes an ideal of incorruptible and unassailable virtue which was rare in the drama of the period"—*CHEL,* VI, 251. According to Miss Brinkley, however, Field "cannot conceive of a woman that is pure of heart"—*op. cit.,* p. 58.

[21]*An Account of the English Dramatick Poets* (Oxford, 1691), p. 198.

[22]P. 338. Since *Weathercock* was published in 1612 and *Amends* in 1618, Field is asking the constant woman to remain constant six years.

[23]Chiefly an allusion in Anthony Stafford's *Admonition to a Discontented Romanist* in his *Niobe Dissolved into a Nilus,* entered *SR* 10 October 1611: "I will never write an *Amends for Women* till I see Woman Amended"—F. G. Fleay, *A Biographical Chronicle of the English Drama* (London, 1891), I, 201 and J. P. Collier, *A History of English Dramatic Poetry* (London, 1879), III, 434.

[24]*Op. cit.,* III, 50.

[25]Quoted in Dodsley, *A Select Collection of Old English Plays* (London, 1874-1876), XI, 89.

[26]*Nero,* p. 334.

[27]*CHEL,* VI, 250.

[28]*Op. cit.,* p. 47. Elsewhere, however, Miss Brinkley says with more discrimination, "Though he is clever to portray woman as a weathercock, he is still more clever to make her an amends without the slightest change in attitude"—*ibid.,* p. 58.

[29]"Fable" seems a satisfactory term because it suggests on the simplest level the embodiment of an idea in a narrative. "Plot," with connotations of narrative technique, is less acceptable.

[30]I, 1; p. 342.

[31]I, 1; p. 346.

[32]II, 1[ p. 364.

[33]III, 2; p. 380.

[34]*Ibid.*

[35]P. 4, n. 17.

[36]IV, 1; pp. 390, 392.

[37]Field neglects, for example, to give us advance indication that Worldly is a severe father who through control of Bellafront's fortune forces her, as he thinks, to marry Count Frederick (III, 2; p. 380) or that Scudmore has either neglected Bellafront or violated her confidences (*ibid.*).

[38]V, 1; p. 400.

[39]V, 2; p. 405.

[40]I, 2; p. 350.

[41]I, 2; pp. 356f; II, [1]; pp. 367, 368.

[42]Or so I take it. Apparently on the basis of Nevill's reply to Kate's question after his unmasking, as to whether she is really married, "So, Mistress Kate, I kept you for myself" (V, 2[ p. 407), Miss Brinkley concludes that Kate is intended to marry Nevill (*op. cit.,* p. 50). Two other lines, however, "Were not my heart given to another man" (V, 2; p. 408) and, when Strange reveals himself, "O my dear Strange!" (V, 2; p. 409), supported as they are by the strongly united family front of Worldly, Scudmore, Lucida, and Bellafront, by Katherine's being grouped with Strange in the stage picture (V, 2; p. 410), and by the lack of preparation for any change of heart and of solution to the problem which would arise if Kate were to marry Nevill, constitute strong evidence that Kate remains steadfast in her love for her sympathetically portrayed merchant, Strange.

[43]I, 2; p. 348.

[44]I, 2; p. 354.

[45]V, 2; pp. 410, 411.

[46]While wearing the willow for Frederick she refuses to marry anyone else or to pine for him since "It is not him I love now, but my humour" (I, 2; p. 358) but this was doubtless thought to be humorous.

[47]I, [1]; p. 4[1]9.

[48]I, 1; p. 421.

[49]II, 3[ p. 442.

[50]II, 3; p. 443.

[51]II, 3; p. 444.

[52]III, 2; p. 4[5]0.

[53]III, 2; pp. 451f.

[54]IV, 3; p. 470.

[55]IV, 3; p. 474.

[56]IV, 3; p. 475.

[57]*Ibid.* Note the use of a proverb, with its appeal to authority, to drive home this thrust. Field's plays contain fifty-eight proverbs and proverbial expressions.

[58]V, 2; p. 485.

[59]Probably with some borrowing from Cervantes or one of his debtors. As early as 1691 it was said that "The Plot of *Subtles* tempting the married wife, at her Husbands entreaty, seems to be founded on *Don Quixote's* [*sic*] Novel of the *Curious Impertinent*"—Langbaine, *op. cit.,* p. 198. The question of the sources of *Amends,* however, is not satisfactorily settled.

[60]Not, as has always been said, Sir John Loveall, a person only mentioned in *Amends.* See *N & Q,* CLXXXIX (1945), No. 9, p. 192.

[61]II, 2; pp. 438, 439.

[62]II, 2[ p. 441.

[63]P. 5, n. 19.
[64]V, 1; pp. 478f.
[65]V, 1; p. 480.
[66]I, 1; p. 423.
[67]IV, 1; pp. 464f.
[68]IV, 1; p. 464.
[69]V, 2; p. 488.
[70]Field was by no means the only person to make literary capital of the feminist controversy. Earlier Lyly had indicted women in "A Cooling Carde for Philautus" and apparently recanted in "To the Grave Maidens of Italy"—*Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit; Works,* ed. R. W. Bond (Oxford, 1902), I, 246-257; 257-259. As Wright points out, Edward Gosynhill too had written on both sides of the question and achieved considerable popularity—*op. cit.,* pp. 468f. Cf. also the printer John Kynge, who published Gosynhill's *Prayse of all women* and *The Schole house* "side by side in the same volume"—*CHEL,* III, 101.
[71]P. 480.

## EDITORIAL COMMENTS

By S.A.T.

Of the many, all too many, books and essays recently published which deal with Shakspere and his contemporaries, only few of which contribute anything of value, the outstanding exception is a collection of essays dedicated to Professor George F. Reynolds by his friends among colleagues and students. The volume (398 pages, for $2.50) was published in October 1945 by the University of Colorado as volume 2, number 4, of its Studies in the Humanities, Series B, and bears the title ELIZABETHAN STUDIES AND OTHER ESSAYS. Those who are acquainted with Professor Reynold's invaluable pioneering work in the study of Elizabethan staging, begun in 1905, and his contributions to the art of teaching literature, will be pleased with this tribute to him.

Besides a smiling portrait of kindly Dr. Reynolds and a list of his contributions to literary studies, the book contains 45 essays, some short, some long, some interesting, some dull. To us the most interesting were the twelve essays dealing with the Elizabethans, three with Marlowe, seven with Shakspere, and two with Fletcher, Heywood, and Middleton. The writers of these essays are acknowledged authorities in their field and competent to present their findings and cogitations in an orderly and intelligible manner. Of the not strictly Elizabethan essays, we appreciated most Professor Watt's paper on "The staging of GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE," based wholly on evidence to be found in the text; especially welcome is his defence of the unknown author's dramatic technique.

A typically scholarly volume, attractively and well printed, notwithstanding a very few typographical errors, has engaged our attention. It is entitled *The Concept of Ingratitude in Renaissance English Moral Philosophy* (150 pages) and is the fruit of the labors of Dr. E. Catherine Dunn; the publisher is the Catholic Univercity of America (Washington, D.C.). The subject dealt with is adequately indicated by the title of the book, but the reader will find in the dissertation much interesting comment on friendship, love, chivalry, treason, and honor, in connection with which subjects Shakspere is freely dealt with. An excellent bibliography and a helpful index complete the volume.

One point in the make-up of the treatise we cannot resist commenting on. Dr. Dunn is evidently conscious of metrical niceties with regard to her poetical quotations; elisions are carefully observed. On page 76, quoting from *The Merchant of Venice,* she prints "commandement" instead of "commandment," but on page 15, quoting from *Coriolanus,* she prints "renowned," "deserved" and "unnatural" where the text requires "renown'd," "deserv'd" and "unnat'ral." It is true, of course, that Miss Dunn takes her text from the late Professor Kittredge's edition of the plays but we see no virtue in following the inconsistencies of a crotchety editor, even though that editor was the distinguished "Kitty." There ought to be reason in all things.